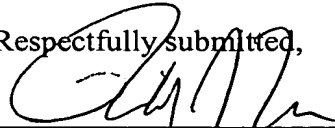


REMARKS

A principal purpose of this Preliminary Amendment is to remove the multiply dependent claims and avoid the fee associated therewith, applicant reserving the right to reintroduce claims to canceled combined subject matter.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard J. Traverso, Reg. No. 30,595
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)

MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO
& BRANIGAN, P.C.
Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1, Suite 1400
2200 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Telephone: (703) 243-6333
Facsimile: (703) 243-6410

Attorney Docket No.: PET-2118

Date: January 29, 2004

RJT: pdr K:\PET\2118\Preliminary Amendment.doc